

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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O P 121453Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2039
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA PRIORITY
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 7529

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, CY, GR
SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY GREEK VIEWS ON CYPRUS DEVELOPMENTS

1. CYPRUS SITUATION IN FLUX: THE WORKING-LEVEL MFA OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR CYPRUS BRIEFED AN EMBOFF AUGUST 12 ON CURRENT GOG THINKING ABOUT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS ON THAT TROUBLED ISLAND. THE OFFICIAL STRESSED THAT THINGS IN CYPRUS ARE VERY MUCH IN FLUX AT THE MOMENT DUE TO THE SORTING OUT PROCESS NOW UNDERWAY CONCERNING THE SUCCESSION, BUT HE EXPECTED A CLEARER PICTURE TO EMERGE BY EARLY NEXT WEEK.

2. SUCCESSION QUESTION: HIS PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT, AS OF AUGUST 12, WAS THAT ACTING PRESIDENT SYPROS KYPRIANOU WOULD CONTINUE IN OFFICE UNTIL FEBRUARY 1978 AS A COMPROMISE SINCE, WITH THE BACKING OF AKEL AND EDEK, HE IS ASSURED OF MORE THAN THE NECESSARY VOTES TO REMAIN IN POWER. HOPEFULLY, DEMOCRATIC RALLY LEADER GLAFKOS CLERIDES WOULD GO ALONG WITH THE KYPRIANOU SOLUTION AND ALLOW THE FORMATION
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OF A UNITED POLITICAL FRONT IN THE DIFFICULT POST-MAKARIOS PERIOD. BUT IF CLERIDES TRIED TO PRESS HIS OWN IDEA FOR ELECTIONS IN SEPTEMBER, WHICH WOULD BE CONTESTED BY THE VARIOUS PARTIES, HE WOULD FAIL BECAUSE HE COULD NOT MUSTER THE REQUIRED SUPPORT.

3. THE MFA OFFICIAL STATED CLERIDES FAVORED EARLY

ELECTION OF THE NEW PRESIDENT SO THAT THE PROCESS OF A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT COULD BE RESUMED SOON AND NOT BE DELAYED UNTIL 1978. WHILE CLERIDES' OBJECTIVE WAS COMMENDABLE, THE OFFICIAL CONTINUED, A CONTESTED ELECTION IN SEPTEMBER WOULD CREATE SUCH A HIGH RISK OF PROVOKING DIVISIVENESS AMONG GREEK CYPRIOTS AS TO BE UNACCEPTABLE NOW. WHAT WAS ESSENTIAL AT THE MOMENT, HE UNDERLINED, WAS GREEK CYPRIOT UNITY, INDICATING THAT FOR ALL HIS DEFICIENCIES KYPRIANOU WAS THE PREFERRED SHORT-TERM CHOICE. IN A RELATED VEIN, HE SCOFFED AT ALLEGATIONS THAT THE GOG COULD "IMPOSE WHOMEVER IT WISHED" AS MAKARIOS' SUCCESSOR, STRESSING THE GOG'S ROLE WAS ONE OF GENUINE ABSTENTION FROM INTERFERING IN INTERNAL CYPRIOT POLITICS OTHER THAN TO ENCOURAGE "UNITY" AND OFFER FULL SUPPORT IN THE INTERNATIONAL FIELD. (HE NOTED THAT GREEK AMBASSADOR TY CYPRUS DOUNTAS' SUDDEN TRIP TO ATHENS ON AUGUST 3 AFTER THE DEATH OF MAKARIOS WAS NOTHING MORE THAN TO BRIEF GOG OFFICIALS IN PERSON, AND THAT THE AMBASSADOR HAD THEN RETURNED TO NICOSIA WITHIN A FEW HOURS.)

4. FUTURE MODES FOR A SETTLEMENT: THE MFA OFFICIAL COMMENTED THAT IT WAS TOO SOON TO FORECAST WHAT VIABLE FORMAT MIGHT BE ADOPTED FOR CONTINUING THE SEARCH FOR A SETTLEMENT ON CYPRUS. SO MUCH WOULD DEPEND ON WHO EMERGED AS THE NEW PRESIDENT IN CYPRUS, HE UNDERLINED. CONFIDENTIAL

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NOTING DENKTASH'S "DENUNCIATION" OF SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE CLARK CLIFFORD AND THE THREAT BY THE TURKISH CYPRIOT SIDE TO END THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS IF MAKARIOS' SUCCESSOR WAS RECOGNIZED INTERNATIONALLY AS THE PRESIDENT OF ALL CYPRUS, OUR SOURCE SAID IT WAS DISTURBING DEVELOPMENT BUT CONSISTENT WITH THE BARGAINING TACTICS OF THE TURKS WHO FIRST TRY TO PRESENT IMPOSSIBLE CONDITIONS ONLY TO BACK AWAY FROM THEM LATER TO GIVE AN IMPRESSION OF MAKING CONCESSIONS. HE PREDICTED THAT THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS WOULD EVENTUALLY HAVE TO RECONVENE AGAIN IN SOME FORMAT OR OTHER BECAUSE THERE WAS REALLY NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE SINCE THE TURKISH SIDE HAD LONG AGO RULED OUT PARTICIPATION IN ANY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.

5. THE UN ALTERNATIVE: THE GOG, OUR SOURCE POINTED OUT, WAS STEADFASTLY OPPOSED TO THE USSR PROPOSAL TO CONVENE AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE UNDER UN AUSPICES TO DEAL WITH CYPRUS SINCE IT WOULD ONLY INVITE MEDDLING BY THE SOVIETS AND HAVE NO POSITIVE RESULT. (COMMENT: GREEK OFFICIALS, HOWEVER, REFRAINED FROM TAKING THIS POSITION PUBLICLY FOR OBVIOUS REASONS.) HE ACKNOWLEDGED

THERE WAS GROWING SENTIMENT IN NICOSIA FOR THE IDEA OF SUCH A CONFERENCE INASMUCH AS ALMOST THREE YEARS AFTER THE 1974 TURKISH INVASION DISILLUSIONMENT HAD SET IN BECAUSE OF THE ABSENCE OF ANY PERCEIVED PROGRESS IN THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS. HE FELT, NEVERTHELESS, THAT MAKARIOS' ASSESSMENT HAD BEEN CORRECT--IT WAS ONLY THE US WHICH COULD CAJOLE AND GUIDE THE TWO SIDES SUFFICIENTLY TO MAKE THEM NEGOTIATE AN EVENTUAL SOLUTION.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ATHENS 7529

THE CURRENT PRO-CONFERENCE FEELING ON THE PART OF THE GREEK CYPRIOTS WOULD COME TO NAUGHT, HE PREDICTED. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE DEFENDED THE GREEK CYPRIOTS' PRESENT INTENTION ONCE AGAIN TO TAKE THEIR CASE TO THE UNGA THIS FALL ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE CYPRIOTS REALLY HAD NO OTHER RECOURSE. ALTHOUGH ALL UNDERSTOOD THAT UNGA RESOLUTIONS ON CYPRUS WERE PRACTICALLY UNENFORCEABLE, IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO CONTINUE TO KEEP ALIVE THE INTEREST OF WORLD OPINION IN THE WRONGS SUFFERED BY THE GREEK CYPRIOTS AT THE HANDS OF THE TURKS. OTHERWISE, THE TURKS WOULD BECOME EVEN MORE INTRANSIGENT. MOREOVER, HE ADDED, AN APPEAL TO THE UNGA WOULD SERVE TO COUNTER THE TURKISH CLAIM THAT MAKARIOS' SUCCESSOR DID NOT REPRESENT ALL OF CYPRUS; AS IN PAST YEARS, THE UNGA WOULD ALLOW THE GOG REPRESENTATIVE TO ADDRESS THE BODY, BUT WOULD DENY THIS RIGHT TO THE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE

TURKISH CYPRIOT SIDE.

6. COMMENT: THE GOG OBVIOUSLY DOES NOT WISH TO BECOME DEEPLY
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ENMESHED IN THE INTERNAL POLITICAL MACHINATIONS OF THE
POST-MAKARIOS PERIOD IN CYPRUS. THE GREEKS HOPE THE
VARIOUS FACTIONS WILL BE ABLE TO COME UP WITH THEIR OWN
FORMULAR TO PRESENT A COMMON FRONT DURING THIS CRITICAL
PERIOD, AND WILL CAREFULLY EXERCISE THEIR INFLUENCE
TOWARD THIS GOAL. HOWEVER, THE GOG'S POSITION ON THE
CYPRUS QUESTION AT THIS POINT REMAINS THE SAME--THE
GOG WILL NOT TAKE INITIATIVES, BUT WILL GIVE FULL PUBLIC
BACKING TO THE GOG IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA.
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